HEADS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE POLICIE of the KIRK,

After ſeveral Conferences, and frequent Diſputation, and Reaſoning, agreed upon in many Aſſemblies, and at laſt at the Aſſembly holden at Glaſgow, and begun Apr. 24. 1581. ordered to be inſert, and regiſtrat in the Acts of the Kirk, as the Act of the ſame Aſſembly hereto perfixèd at more length beareth.

Now publiſhed for the ſatisfaction of theſe who deſire to know, what hath been the Judgment of the Kirk of Scotland in the point of Church Government and Diſcipline, eſpecially the meaner ſort who have neither time nor money to beſtow upon large Hiſtories.

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ACT
Of the
ASSEMBLY.

FOrasmuch as travels have been taken in the framing of the Policie of the Kirk, and diverſe ſutes have been made to the Magiſtrat for the approbation there of, which yet hath not taken the happie effect, that good men would wiſh; yet that the poſteritie may judge well of this preſent age, and of the meaning of the Kirk, the Aſſembly hath concluded, that the Book of policie, agreed to in diverſe Aſſemblies before, ſhould be Regiſtred in the Acts of the Kirk, and remaine there ad perpetuam memoriam, *and the Copies thereof to be taken by every Preſbiterie, of which Book the tenor followeth.*

HEADS, and CONCLUSIONS Of the policie of the Kirk.

CHAP. I.

Of the Kirk, and policie thereof in General, and wherein it is different from the Civil.

THE Kirk of God ſometime is largely taken, for all them that profeſſe the Evangel of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo it is a company and followship not onely of the Godly, but alſo of hypocrites, profeſſing alwayes outwardly the true Religion.

Other times it is taken for the godly, and elect onely, and ſometimes for them that exerciſe ſpiritual function in the Congregation of them that profeſſe the Truth.

The Kirk in this laſt ſenſe hath a certain power granted by God, according to the which it uſes a

proper Juriſdiction & Government, exerciſed to the comfort of the whole Kirke.

This power Eccleſiaſtical is an Authoritie granted by God the Father, through the Mediator Jeſus Chriſt, unto his Kirk gathered, and hath ground in the Word of God to be put in execution by them, unto whom thee Spiritual Government of the Kirk by lawful calling is committed.

The Policie of the Kirk flowing from this power, is an order or forme of Spiritual Government, which is exerciſed by the members, appointed thereto by the Word of God: And therefore is given immediatly to the Office-bearers, by whom it is exerciſed to the good of the whole body.

This power is diverſly uſed; for ſometime it is ſeverally exerciſed, chiefly by the Teachers, ſome time conjunctly by mutual conſent of them that beare the Office and charge, after the forme of judgement. The former is commonely called *Poteſtas Ordinis*, and the other *Poteſtas Juriſdictionis*.

Theſe two kinds of power have both one authority, one ground, one final cauſe; but are different in the manner, and forme of execution. as is evident by the ſpeaking of our maſter in the 16. and 18. of Matthew

This power and policie Eccleſiaſtical is different and diſtinct, in the own nature, from that Power and Policie, which is called Civil power, and appertaineth to the Civil government of

of the Commonwealth: Albeit they be both of God, and tend to one end if they be rightly uſed. viz. to advance the glory of God, and to have godly and good ſubjects.

For this power *Eccleſiaſtical* floweth immediatly from God, and the *Mediator* Jeſus Chriſt, an is ſpiritual, not having a temporal Head in the earth, but Chriſt, the onely Spiritual King and Governour of his *Kirk*.

It is a title falſly uſurped by Antichriſt, to call himſelf Head of the *Kirk*, and ought not to be attributed to Angel, nor man, of what Eſtate ſo ever he be, ſaving to Chriſt the onely Head and Monarch in the *Kirk*.

Therefore this Power and Police of the *Kirk* ſhould leane upon the word immediatly, as the onely ground thereof, and ſhould be taken from the pure fountaines of the Scriptures, the *Kirk* hearing the voice of Chriſt, the onely ſpiritual *King*, and being ruled by his Lawes.

It is proper to *Kings*, Princes and Magiſtrats to be called Lords, and Dominators over their Subjects, whom they govern civilly: But it is proper to Chriſt onely to be called *Lord*, and *Maſter*, in the ſpiritual Government of the *Kirk*; and all others that bear office therein, ought not to uſurp Dominion therein, nor be called Lords, but onely Miniſters, Diſciples, and Servants. For it is Chriſts proper office to Command and Rule his *Kirk* univerſally, and every patticular

Kirk, through his *Spirit* and Word, by the miniſtrie of men.

Notwithſtanding, as the Miniſters, and others of the Eccleſiaſtical Eſtate, are ſubject to the Magiſtrate civil, ſo ought the Perſon of the Magiſtrate, be ſubject to the *Kirk* ſpiritually, and in Eccleſiaſtical Government. And the exerciſe of both theſe juriſdictions cannot ſtand in one perſon ordinarlie.

The Civil power is called the power of the Sword, and the other the power of the *Keyes*.

The Civil power should command the *Spiritual* to exerciſe, and to do their office according to the Word of God; The ſpiritual Rulers should require the Chriſtian Magiſtrate to miniſter juſtice, and punish vice, and to maintaine the libertie and quietneſſe of the *Kirk* within their bounds.

The Magiſtrate commandeth external things, for external peace, & quietneſſe amongſt the Subjects: The Miniſter handleth external thiugs onely for Conſcience cauſe.

The Magiſtrate handleth external things onely, and actions done before men: But the Spiritual Ruler judgeth both inward affections, and external actions, in reſpect of Conſcience by the word of God.

The civil Magiſtrate craves and gets obedience by the Sword, and other external meanes: But the Miniſtrie, by the ſpiritual ſword, and ſpiritual meanes.

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The Magistrate neither ought to Preach, minister the *Sacraments*, nor execute the Censures of the *Kirk*, nor yet prescribe any Rule, how it should be done; but command the Ministers to observe the Rule commanded in the Word, and punish the transgressors by Civil meanes. The Ministers exerce not the civil Jurisdictiou, but teach the Magistrate, how it should be exercised according to the Word.

The Magistrate ought to assist, maintaine and fortifie the jurisdiction of the *Kirk*. The Ministers should assist their Princes, in all things agreable to the word, providing they neglect not their own charge by involving themselves in civil affaires.

Finally, as Ministers are subject to the judgment and punishment of the Magistrate, in external things, if they offend: So ought the Magistrats to submit themselves to the Discipline of the *Kirk*, if they transgresse in matters of Conscience, and Religion.

Chap. II.

Of the Policie of the Kirk, and Persons and Office-bearers, to whom the Administration is committed.

As in the civil Policie, the whole Commonwealth consisteth in them that are Gover-

nours, or Magistrates, and them that are Governed, or Subjects. So in the Policie of the *Kirk*, some are appointed to be Rulers, and the rest of the members thereof to be Ruled, and obey according to the Word of *God*, and inspiration of his *Spirit*, alwayes under one Head and chiefe Governour, Jesus Christ

Againe, the whole Policie of the *Kirk* consisteth in three things, in Doctrine, Discipline, and Distribution. With Doctrine is annexed the Administration of Sacraments: And according to the parts of this Division, ariseth a threefold sort of officers in the *Kirk*, to wit, of Ministers Preachers, Elders Governours, and Deacons Distributers. And all these may be called by a general word, Ministers of the *Kirk*. For albeit the *Kirk* of God be ruled and governed by Jesus Christ, who is the onely King, High Priest, and Head thereof, yet he useth the ministery of men, as the most necessary mids for this purpose.

For so He hath from time to time, before the law, under the law, & in the time of the Evangel, for our great comfort, raised up men endued with the gifts of the Spirit, for the spiritual Government of his *Kirk*, through his Spirit exercising by them his own Power and Word to the building up of the same.

And to take away all occasion of tyranny, He willeth that they should rule with mutual consent, as brethren, with æqualitie of power, every one according to their function. In

In the new Teſtament, and time of the Evangel, He hath uſed the Miniſterie of the Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Paſtors, and Doctors, in adminiſtration of the word; the Eldership for good order, & adminiſtration of Diſcipline. The Deaconſhip to have the care of the Eccleſiaſtical goods.

Some of theſe Eccleſiaſtical functions are Ordinary, and ſome Extraordinary or Temporarie. There be three extraordinary functions; The office of the Apoſtles, of the Evangeliſt, and of the Prophet, which are not perpetual, and now have ceaſed in the Kirk of God; except when it pleaſeth *God* extraordinarily for a time to ſtirre ſome of them up againe.

There are foure ordinarie functions or offices in the *Kirke* of God, the office of the Paſtor Miniſter or Biſhop. the Doctor, the *Presbyter* or Elder, and the Deacon.

Theſe offices are Ordinarie, and ought to continue perpetually in the *Kirke*, as neceſſary for the *Government*, and Policie thereof, and no moe offices ought to be received or ſuffered in the *Kirk* of God, eſtabliſhed according to his Word.

Therefore all the ambitious titles, invented in the *Kingdome* of Antichriſt, and in his uſurped Hierarchie, which are not of one of theſe foure ſorts, together with the offices depending thereupon, in one word ought to be rejected.

CHAP. III.

How the Persons, that beare Ecclesiastical functions, are to be admitted to their office.

VOcation or calliug is common to all that should beare office within the Kirk, which is a lawful way, by the which qualified persons are promoted to any spiritual office within the Kirk of God.

Without this lawful calling it was never leasome to any person, to meddle with any function Ecclesiastical.

There are two sorts of Calling, one Extraordinary by God immediately, as was that of the Prophets and Apostles, which, in Kirks established, and alreadie well reformed, hath no place.

The other Calling is Ordinarie, which besides the Calling of God, and inward testimonie of a good Conscience, hath the lawful approbation, and outward judgment of men, according to Gods Word, and order established in His Kirk.

None ought to presume to enter into any Office Ecclesiastical, without this testimony of good conscience before God, who onely knowes the hearts of men.

This ordinary and outwardt Calling hath two parts,

parts, Election and Ordination. Election is the chooſing out of a perſon or perſons, moſt able, to the Office that vaikes, by the judgment of the Eldership, and conſent of the Congregation, to which the perſon, or perſons ſhall be appointed.

The Qualifications requiſite in all them, who ſhould beare charge in the Kirk, conſiſt in Soundneſs of Religion, and Godlineſs of Life, according as they are ſufficiently ſet forth in the Word.

In the order of Election is to be eſchued, that any perſon be intruded in any Offices of the Kirk, contrary to the will of the Congregation, to which they are appointed, or without the voice of the Eldership.

None ought to be intruded, or placed in the Place already planted, or in any place that vaikes not, for any worldlie reſpect: And that which is called the Benefice ought to be nothing elſe, but the ſtipend of the Miniſters that are lawfully called.

Ordination is the Separation and ſanctifying of the Perſon appointed to God and his Kirk, after he is well tried and found qualified.

The Ceremonies of Ordination are Faſting, earneſt Prayer, and Impoſition of hands of the Eldership.

All theſe, as they muſt be raiſed up by God, and by him made able for the work whereto they are called; ſo ought they to know their meſſage to

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be limited within Gods word, without the bounds of the which they ought not to passe.

All these should take those titles, & names onely (lest they be exalted, and puft up in themselves) which the Scriptures give unto them, as these which import labour, travel and work, and are names of offices and service, and not of idlenesse, dignity, worldly honour or preheminence, which by Christ our Master is expresly reproved and forbidden.

All these Office-bearers should have their own particular Flocks, amongst whom they exercise their charge.

All should make residence with them, and take the inspection and oversight of them, every one in his vocation.

And generally these two things ought they all to respect: The Glorie of God, and edifying of his Kirk, in discharging their duties in their calling.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Office-bearers in particular, and first of the Pastors or Ministers.

PAstors, Bishops, or Ministers, are they who are appointed to particular Congregations, which they rule by the word of God, and over the which they watch; In respect whereof, sometime they are called Pastors, because they feed their

their Congregation; ſometime *Epiſcopi*, or Biſhops, becauſe they watch over their Flock; ſometime Miniſter becauſe of their ſervice, & office ſometimes alſo Presbyters or Seniors, for the gravity in manners, which they ought to have, in taking care of the ſpiritual government, which ought to be moſt deare unto them.

They that are called unto the Miniſterie, or that offer themſelves thereunto, ought not to be elected without ſome certain Flock aſſigned unto them,

No man ought to ingyre himſelfe, or uſurpe this Office without a lawful calling.

They who are once called by God, and duely elected by man, after that they have once accepted the charge of the Miniſtrie may not leave their functions,

The deſertours should be admonished, and in caſe of obſtinacie finally excommunicated.

No Paſtor may leave his Elock without licence of the Provincial, or National Aſſembly; which if he doe, after admonitions not obeyed, let the Cenſures of the Kirk ſtrick upon him.

Unto the Paſtors appertaaine Teaching of the Word of God, in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon publickly & privatly, alwayes traveling to ediſie, and to diſcharge his Conſcience, as Gods Word preſcribes to him.

Unto the Paſtors onely appertains the adminiſtration of the Sacraments, in like manner as the admi-

administration of the Word: For both are appointed by God, as meanes to teach, the one by the eare, and the other by the eyes, and other senses; that by both, knowledge may be transferred to the minde.

It appertains by the same Reason to the Pastor, to pray for the People, and namely, for the Flock committed to his Charge, and to blesse them in the Name of the Lord, who will not suffer the Blessings of his faithful Servants to be fustrate.

He ought also to Watch over the manners of the Flock, that he may the better apply the Doctrine to them, in reprehending the dissolute persons, and exhorting the godly to continue in the fear of the Lord.

It appertains to the Minister. after lawful proceeding by the Eldership, to pronounce the Sentence of Binding and Loosing upon any person, according unto the power of the *Keyes* granted unto the *Kirk*.

It belongs to him likewise, after lawful proceeding in the matter by the Eldership, to solemnizate marriage betwixt them, that are to be joyned therin; and to pronounce the blessing of the Lord upon them, that enter into that holy band in the fear of God.

And generally all publick Denunciations, that are to be made in the *Kirk*, before the Congregation, concerning the Ecclesiastical affaires, belong to the Office of a Minister: For he is as a Mes-

Messenger and Herauld betwixt God and the people in all these affaires.

CHAP. V.

Of Doctors, and their Office, and of the Schooles.

ONe of the two Ordinary and perpetual Functions that travel in the Word, is the Office of the Doctor, who may be also called a Prophet, Bishop, Elder, Catechiser; that is, Teacher of the Catechisme, and Rudiments of Religion.

His office is to open up the minde of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, simply, without such applications as the Ministers use, to the end that the faithful may be instructed, and sound Doctrine taught, and that the purity of the Gospel be not corrupted through ignorance, or evil opinions.

He is different from the Pastor, not onely in name; but in diversity of gifts: For to the Doctor is given the word of knowledge to open up, by simple teaching, the mysteries of faith: to the Pastors the gift of wisedome, to apply the same by exhortation to the manners of the Flock, as occasion craveth.

Under the name & office of a Doctor, we comprehend also the Order of Schooles, Colledges, & Universities, which hath heen from time to time

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carefully maintained, as well among the Iewes and Christians, as among the prophane Nations.

The Doctor being an Elder, as said is, should assist the Pastor, in the Goverument of the Kirk, and concurre with the Elders his Brethren, in all Assemblies by reason the Interpretation of the Word which is onely judge in Ecclesiastical matters, is committed to his charge.

But to preach unto the People, to minister the Sacraments, & to celebrate Marriages, pertaine not to the Doctor, unlesse he be otherwise called ordinarily: howbeit the Pastor may teach in the Schooles, as he, who hath the gift of knowledge oftentimes meet for that end, as the examples of *Policarpus*, and others testifie; &c.

Chap. VI.

Of Elders, and their Office.

The word Elder in the Scripture, sometime is the name of Age, sometime of Office. When it is the name of any Office, sometime it is taken largely, comprehending as well the Pastors and Doctors, as them who are called Seniors or Elders.

In this our division, we call these Elders, whom the Apostles call Presidents or Governours: Their office as it is ordinary, so is it perpetual, and alwayes necessarie in the Kirk of God. The Elders,

dership is a ſpiritual Function, as is the Miniſtrie.

Elders once lawfully called to the office, and having gifts from God meet to exerciſe the ſame, may not leave it againe. Albeit ſuch a number of Elders may be choſen in certain Congregations, that one part of them may relieve another, for a reaſonable time, as was among the Levites under the Law, in ſerving of the Temple.

The number of the Elders in every Congregation cannot well be limited, but should be according to the bounds and neceſſitie of the people.

It is not neceſſarie, that all Elders be alſo teachers of the Word, albeit the chiefe ought to be ſuch; and ſo are worthie of double honour.

What manner of perſons they ought to be, we referre it to the expreſſe word, and namely, to the Canons written by the Apoſtle Paul.

Their office is as well ſeverally, as conjunctly, to watch diligently over the flock committed to their charge, both publickly, and privately, that no corruption of Religion, or manners, enter therein.

As the Paſtors and Doctors should be diligent in teaching, and ſowing the ſeed of the Word; ſo the Elders should be careful in ſeeking after the fruit of the ſame in the people.

It appertaines to them to aſſiſt the Paſtor, in examination of them that come to the Lords Table: Item, in viſiting the ſick.

They should cauſe the Acts of the Aſſemblies,

as well Particular as General, to be put in execution carefully.

They should be diligent in admonishing all men of their dutie, according to the rule of the Evangel.

Things that they cannot correct by private Admonitions, they should bring to the Eldership.

Their principal Office is to hold Assemblies with the Pastors and Doctors, who are also of their number, for establishing of good Order, and execution of Discipline, unto the which Assemblies all Persons are subject that remaine within their bounds.

CHAP VII.

Of the Elderships Assemblies, and Discipline.

ELderships and assemblies are commonly constitute of Pastors, Doctors, and such as we commonly call Elders, that labour not in the Word and Doctrine, of whom, and of whose several power hath been spoken.

Assemblies are of foure sorts. For either they are of particular Kirks and Congregrations one or moe, or of a Province, or of a whole Nation, or of all and diverse Nations professing one Jesus Christ.

All the Ecclesiastical Assemblies have power to con-

conveene lawfully together, for treating of things concerning the *Kirk*, and pertaining to their Charge.

They have power to appoint times, and places to that effect, and at one meeting to appoint the dyet, time and place to another.

In all Assemblies a Moderator should be chosen by common consent of the whole Brethren conveened, who should propone mattets, gather the votes, and cause good order to be kept in the Assemblies.

Diligence should be taken chiefly by the Moderator, that onely Ecclesiastical things be handled in the Assemblies, and that there be no medling with any thing pertaining to the Civil Jurisdiction.

Every Assemblie hath power to send forth from them, of their own number, one or more Visitours, to see how all things be ruled in the bounds of their Jurisdictions.

Visitation of moe *Kirks* is no ordinary Office Ecclesiastick, in the person of one man, neither may the name of a Bishop be attributed to the Visitor onely, neither is it necessary to abide all wayes in one mans Person; but it is the part of the Eldership to send out qualfied Persons to visite *pro re nata*.

The final end of Assemblies is, first, to keep Religion and Doctrine in puritie, without error

and corruption. Next, to keep Commelineſſe and good Order in the *Kirk*.

For this Orders cauſe, they may make certajne Rules & Conſtitutions appertaining to the good behaviours of all the members of the Kirk, in their vocation.

They have power alſo to abrogate and abolish all Statutes and Ordinances, concerning Eccleſiaſtical matters, that are found noyſome and unprofitable, and agree not with the time, or are abuſed by the people.

They have power to execute Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline and punishment upon all transgreſſors, and proud contemners of the good order and policie of the Kirk: and ſo the whole Diſcipline is in their hands.

The firſt kinde and ſort of Aſſemblies, although they be within particular Congregations, yet they exerce the Power, and Juriſdiction of the *Kirk* with mutual conſent, and therefore beare ſometime the name of the Kirk.

When we ſpeake of the Elders of the Particular Congregations, we mean not that every Particular Parish *Kirk* can, or may have their own particular Elderships, ſpecially in Landward; but we think three, foure, moe or fewer particular *Kirks*, may have one Elderſhip, common to them all, to judge their *Eccleſiaſtical* cauſes.

Yet this is meet that ſome of the Elders be choſen out of every particular Congregation, to concurre

curre with the reſt of their Brethren in the Common Aſſemblie, and to take up the delations of offences within their owne *Kirks*, and bring them to the Aſſemblie.

This we gather out of the practice of the *Primitive* Kirk, where Elders or Colledges of Seniors were conſtitute in Cities and famous places.

The power of their particular Elderſhips is to uſe diligent labours, in the bounds committed to their charge, that the *Kirks* be kept in good order, to enquire diligently in naughtie and unruly perſons, & travel to bring them in the way againe, either by Admonition or Threatning of Gods judgments; or by Correction.

It pertaines to the Eldership to take heed, that the Word of God be purely preached within their bounds, the Sacraments rightly miniſtred, the *Diſcipline* rightly maintained, and the Eccleſiaſtical Goods uncorruptly diſtributed.

It belongs to this Kinde of Aſſembly, to cauſe the Ordinances, made by the Aſſemblies Provincial National, and General, to be kept, and put in execution.

To make Conſtitutions, which concerne τὰ πρέποντα in the Kirk, for the decent order of theſe particular *Kirks*, where they governe; Providing they alter no Rules made by the General or Provincial Aſſemblies: And that they make the Provincial Aſſemblies foreſeen of theſe Rules that

they shall make, and abolish them that tend to the hurt of the same.

It hath power to excommunicate the Obstinate.

The Power of Election of them, who beare Ecclesiastical Charges, pertaines to this kind of Assembly, within their owne bounds, being well erected and constituite of many Pastors; and Elders of sufficient abilitie.

By the like reason their Deposition also pertains to this kinde of Assembly, as of them that teach erroneus and corrupt Doctrine, that be of Scandalous life, and after admonitions desist not, that be given to *Schisme*, or Rebellion against the *Kirk*, manifest Blasphemie, Simonie, Corruption of Bribes, Falshood, Perjurie, Whordome, Theft, Drunkennesse, Fighting worthie of punishment by the Law, Usurie, Daunсing, Infamie, and all others, that deserve separation from the *Kirk*.

These also, who are altogether found Insufficient to execute that charge, should be deposed, whereof other *Kirks* should be advertised, that they receive not the persons deposed.

Yet they ought not be deposed, who through Age, Sickneſſe, or other accidents, become unmeet to do their Office; in which case their honour should remain to them, their *Kirk* should maintaine them, and others ought to be provided to do their Office.

Provincial Assemblies we call lawful Conventi-

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ons of the Paſtors, Doctors, and other Elders of a Province, gathered for the common affaires of the Kirks thereof, which alſo may be called the Conference of the Kirk and Brethren.

Theſe Aſſemblies are inſtitute for weightie matters, to be handled by mutual conſent and aſſiſtance of the Brethren within that Province, as need requires.

This Aſſembly hath power to handle, order, and redreſſe all things omitted or done amiſſe in the particular Aſſemblies.

It hath power to depoſe the Office-bearers of that Province, for good and juſt cauſes deſerving Depriuation.

And generally theſe Aſſemblies have the whole power of the particular Elderships, whereof they are collected.

The National Aſſenbly, which is General to us, is a lawful Convention of the whole Kirks of the Realm or Nation, where it is uſed and gathered, for the common affaires of the Kirk, and may be called the General Eldership of the whole Kirks in the Realme. None are ſubject to repaire to this Aſſembly to vote, but Eccleſiaſtical perſons to ſuch a number, as ſhall be thought good by the ſame Aſſemblie, not excludig other perſons, that will repaire to the ſaid Aſſembly to Propone, Heare, and Reaſon.

This Aſſemblie is inſtituted, that all things either omitted, or done amiſſe in the Provincial

Assemblies, may be redressed and handled, and things generally serving for the good of the whole bodie of the *Kirk* within the Realme may be foreseene, treated, and set forth to Gods glorie.

It should take care, that *Kirks* be planted in places, where they are not planted.

It should prescribe the Rule, how the other two *Kinds* of Assemblies should proceed in all things.

This Assemblie should take heed, that the spiritual Jurisdiction, and Civil, be not confounded, to the hurt of the *Kirk*, That the Patrimonie of the *Kirk* be not consumed, nor abused: and generally concerning all weighty affaires, that concerne the weale and good order of the whole *Kirks* of the Realme, it ought to interpone Authoritie thereto.

There is besides these, an other more general kinde of Assemblie, which is of all Nations, and all Estates of *Persons* within the *Kirk*, representing the Universal Kirk of Christ, which may be called properly the General Assembly, or Generall Councel of the Kirk of God.

These Assemblies were appointed and called together specially, when any great Schisme or Controversie in Doctrine did arise in the Kirk: And were convocate at command of godly Emperours being for the time, for avoiding of Schismes within the Universal *Kirk* of God; which because they

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pertaine not to the particular eſtate of any Realme we ceaſe further to ſpeake of them.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Deacons and thir Office, the laſt ordinary Function in the Kirk.

THe word Διάκονος ſometimes is largely taken, comprehending all them that beare office in the Miniſtrie, and ſpiritual function in the Kirk.

But now, as we ſpeake, it is taken onely for them, unto whom the collection and diſtribution of the Almes of the faithful, and Eccleſiaſtical goods doth belong.

The office of the Deacons ſo taken, is an ordinarie and perpetual Eccleſiaſtical function in the *Kirk* of Chriſt.

Of what properties and duties he ought to be, that is called to this function, we remit it to the manifeſt Scriptures.

The Deacon ought to be called and elected, as the reſt of the ſpiritual Officers, of the which Election was ſpoken before.

Their Office and *Power* is to receive, and to diſtribute the whole Eccleſiaſtical Goods unto them, to whom they are appointed.

This they ought to do, according to the judgement, and appointment of the Prerbyteries, or Elderships, (of the which the Deacons are not

members) that the Patrimony of the *Kirk* and Poore, be not converted to private mens uſes, nor wrongfully diſtributed.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Patrimonie of the Kirk, and diſtribution thereof.

BY the Patrimonie of the *Kirk*, we meane whatſoever thing hath been at any time before, or ſhall be in times coming given, or by conſent or univerſal cuſtome of Countries, profeſſing the Chriſtian Religion applyed to the publicke uſe and utilitie of the *Kirk*.

So that under the Patrimonie we comprehend all things given, or to be given to the *Kirk* and Service of God, as Lands; Buildings, Poſſeſſions Annual rents, and all ſuch like, wherewith the *Kirk* is doted, either by Donations, Foundations, Mortifications, or any other lawful titles of Kings, Princes, or any perſons inferiour to them, together with the continual Oblations of the faithful.

We comprehend alſo all ſuch things, as by Lawes or Cuſtome, or uſe of Countries, have been applied to the uſe and utility of the *Kirk*; of the which ſort are Teindes, Manſes, Gleibs, and ſuch like, which by common and municipal lawes, and univerſal cuſtome, are poſſeſſed by the *Kirk*.

To

To take any of this Patrimonie by unlawful meanes, and convert it to the particular and prophane uſe of any Perſon, we hold it a deteſtable Sacrilege before God.

The goods Eccleſiaſtical ought to be collected, and diſtributed by the Deacons, as the Word of God appoints, that they who beare Office in the *Kirk* be provided for, without care or ſollicitude.

In the Apoſtolical Kirk, the Deacons were appointed to collect & diſtribute what ſumme ſoever was collected of the faithfull, to diſtribute unto the neceſſitie of the *Saints*, ſo that none lacked amongſt the faithful.

Theſe collections were not onely of that, which was collected in manner of Almes, as ſome ſuppoſe, but of other Goods moveable, and unmoveable, of Lands and Poſſeſſions, the price whereof was brought to the feet of the Apoſtles.

This Office continued in the Deacons hands, who intrometted with the whole Goods of the *Kirk*, ay & while the Eſtate thereof was corrupted by Antichriſt, as the ancient Canons beare witneſs.

The ſame Canons make mention of a fourefold diſtribution of the Patrimonie of the *Kirk*, whereof one part was applied to the Paſtor or Bishop, for his Suſtentation and Hoſpitality. Another to the Elders and Deacons, and all the Clergie; the third for the Poore, Sick Perſons and Stangers; the

the fourth to the upholding of other Affaires of the *Kirk*, especially Extraordinarie.

We adde hereunto the Schooles and Schol masters also, which ought and may be well sustained of the same goods, & are comprehended under the Clergie. To whom we joyn all Clerks of Assemblies, as well Particular as General. *Syndicks* or Procurators of the Kirk affaires, takers-up of Psalmes and such like other ordinary Officers of the *Kirk*, so farre as they are necessary.

CHAP. X.

Of the Office of a Christian Magistrate, in the Kirk.

ALthough all the members of the *Kirk* be holden, every one in their vocation, and according thereto, to advance the *Kingdome* of Jesus Christ, so far as lyeth in their power; yet chiefly Christian Princes, and other Magistrates, are holden to doe the same.

For they are called in the Scripture, Nourishers of the *Kirk*, for so much as by them it is, or at least ought to be Maintained, Fostered, Upholden, and Defended against all that would procure the hurt thereof.

So it pertaines to the Office of a Christian Magistrate, to assist and fortifie the godly proceedings of the Kirk, in all behalfs; and namely to see that the

the publick Eſtate and Miniſterie thereof be maintained and ſuſtained, as it appertaines, according to Gods Word.

To ſee that the *Kirk* be not invaded, nor hurt by falſe Teachers, and Hirelings, nor the roomes thereof occupied by dumb doggs, or idle bellies.

To aſſiſt and maintaine the Diſcipline of the *Kirk*. and punish them civilly, that will not obey the cenſure of the ſame, without confounding alawyes the one Juriſdiction with the other.

To ſee that ſufficient proviſion be made for the Miniſterie, the *Schooles* and the Poore: And if they have not ſufficient to awaite upon their charges, to ſupply their indigence even with their own rents, if need require.

To hold hand as well to the ſaving of their Perſons from injurie, and open violence, as to their *Rents* and Poſſeſſions, that they be not defrauded, robbed, nor ſpoiled thereof.

Not to ſuffer the patrimony of the Kirk to be applyed to profane and unlawful uſes, or to be devoured by idle bellies, & ſuch as have no lawful function in the Kirk, to the hurt of the Miniſtery, Schooles Poore, and other godly uſes, whereupon the ſame ought to be beſtowed.

To make Lawes and Conſtitutions agreable to Gods Word, for advancement of the *Kirk*, and Policie thereof, without uſurping any thing that pertains not to the civil Sword, but belongs to the

Office

Offices that are meerly Eccleſiaſtical as is the miniſtrie of the word & Sacraments, uſing eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, & the Spiritual Execution thereof, or any part of the Power of the ſpiritual keyes, which our Maſter gave to the Apoſtles, and to their true Succeſſours.

And although Kings and Princes that be godly, ſome times by their own authority, when the Kirk is corrupted, and all things out of order, place Miniſters, and reſtore the true Service of the Lord, after the example of ſome godly *Kings* of *Iuda*, and divers godly Emperours, & *Kings* alſo, in the light of the new Teſtament. Yet where the Miniſterie of the *Kirk* is once lawfully conſtitute, and they that are placed doe their office faithfully, all godly Princes and Magiſtrates ought to heare and obey their voice, and reverence the Majeſtie of the Son of God ſpeaking in them.

CHAP. XI.

Of the preſent abuſes remaining in the Kirk, which we deſire to be reformed.

AS it is the duty of the godly Magiſtrate to maintain the preſent Liberty, which God hath granted by the preaching of his Word, & the true adminiſtration of the Sacraments within this Realme: So it is to provide; that all abuſes which yet remaine in the *Kirk* be removed, and utterly taken away: There-

Therefore first the admission of men to Papistical titles of benefices, such as serve not, nor haue no function in the Reformed Kirk of Christ, as Abbotes, Commendators, Priors, Prioresses, and other titles of Abbacies, whose places are now for the most part by the just judgment of God demolished, & purged of Idolatrie, is a plaine abuse and is not to receive the Kingdom of Christ amongst us, but rather to refuse it.

Such like that they that of old were called the Chapters and Convents of Abbeys, Cathedral Kirks, and like places, serve for nothing now, but to set fewes and tacks, if any thing be left of the Kirk lands and teinds, in hurt and prejudice thereof, as daily experience teacheth; and therefore ought to be utterly abrogate and abolished.

Of the like nature are the Deanes, Archdeacones, Chantours, Subchantours, Thesaurers, Chancellors, & others having the like titles flowing from the Pope and Canon Law onely, who have no place in the reformed Kirk.

The Kirks also which are united together, and joyned by annexation to their benefices, ought to be separated and divided, and given to qualified Ministers, as Gods word craves.

Neither ought such abusers of the Kirk Patrimony to have vote in parliament, nor sit in Councel, under the name of the Kirk and Kirkmen, to the hurt and prejudice of the liberty thereof,

and

and lawes of the Realme, made in favour of the Reformed *Kirk*.

Much leſſe is it lawful that any Perſon amongſt theſe men ſhould have ſiue, ſixteen, twenty or more *Kirks*, all craving the charge of ſoules, and enjoy the Patrimony thereof, either by admiſſion of the Prince, or of the *Kirk*, in this light of the *Evangel*. For it is but a mockage to crave reformation where ſuch like have place.

And in ſo far, as in the order taken at *Leith* in the yeare of our Lord 1571, it appeares that ſuch may be admitted, being found qualified; either that pretended order is againſt all good order, or elſe it muſt be underſtood not of them that be qualified in wordly affaires, or to ſerve in Court, but of ſuch as are qualified to teach Gods word, having their lawful admiſſion of the *Kirk*.

As to Biſhops if the name be properly taken, they are all one with the Miniſters, as before was declared. For it is not a name of *Superioritie*, and Lordship, but of Office and Watching.

Yet becauſe in the corruption of the *Kirk*, this name (as others) hath been abuſed, and yet is likely to be, we cannot allow the faſhion of theſe new choſen Biſhops, neither of the Chapters, that are Electors of them to ſuch an office, as they are choſen unto.

True Biſhops ſhould addict themſelves to a particular Flock, which ſundry of them refuſe; neither

neither ſhould they uſurpe Lordſhip over their Brethren, and over the inheritance of Chriſt, as theſe men doe.

Paſtors, in ſo far as they are paſtors, have not the office of Viſitation of moe *Kirks* joyned to the Paſtorſhip, without it be given to them.

It is a corruption, that Bishops should have further bounds to viſite, nor they may lawfullie.

No man ought to have the office of viſitation, but he that is lawfully choſen thereunto.

The Elderships, being well eſtablished, have power to ſend out Viſitours one or moe, with commiſſion to viſite the bounds within their Eldership, and likewiſe, after account taken of them, either continue them, or remove them from time to time, to the which Elderships they should be alwayes ſubject.

The civil juriſdiction in the Perſon of a Paſtor, is a corruption.

It agreeth not with the Word of God, that Bishops should be Paſtors of Paſtors, Paſtors of many flockes, and yet without a certain Flock, and without ordinary teaching.

It agreeth not with the Scriptures, that they should be exeemed from the Correction of their Brethren, and Diſcipline of the particular Eldership of the *Kirk* where they shall ſerve, neither that they uſurpe the Office of Viſitation of other *Kirks* nor any other Function beſide other Miniſters, but ſo far as shall be committed to them by the *Kirk*.

Wherefore, we desire the Bishops that now are, either to agree to that order, that Gods word requires in them, as the General *Kirk* will prescribe unto them, not passing their bounds, either in Ecclesiastical or Civil Affaires; or else to be Deposed from all Function in the Kirk.

We denie not, in the meane time, but Ministers may and should assist their Princes when they are required, in all things agreable to the Word, whether it be in Councel or Parliament, or otherwayes; providing alwayes they neither neglect their owne Charges, nor through flattery of Princes, hurt the publick Estate of the *Kirk*.

But generally we say, no person, under whatsomever Title of the *Kirk*, and specially the abused Titles in Papistrie, Prelats, Convents, and Chapters, ought to attempt any act in the Kirks name, either in Councel, or Parliament, or out of Councel, having no commission of the reformed *Kirk* within this Realme.

And by Act of Parliament, it is provided, that the *Papistical Kirk* and Jurisdiction should have no place within the same, and no Bishop nor other Prelate, in times comming, should use any Jurisdiction flowing from his Authority.

And againe, that no other Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction should be acknowledged within this Realm, but that which is, and shall be in the reformed *Kirk*, and flowing therefrom.

So we esteem holding of Chapters in a Papistical manner

manner, either in Cathedral *Kirks*, Abbayes, Colledges, or other Conventual Places, uſurping the Name and Authority of the *Kirk*, to hurt the Patrimonie thereof, or uſe any other Act to the prejudice of the ſame, ſince the Year of our Lord 1560. to be an abuſe and corruption, contrarie to the Libertie of the true *Kirk*, and Lawes of the Realme, and therefore ought to be annulled, reduced, and in times coming utterly diſcharged.

The dependances alſo of the Papiſtical Juriſdiction are to be abolished. of the which ſort is mixed juriſdiction of the Commiſſars, in ſo far as they meddle with Eccleſiaſtical matters, and have no commiſſion of the *Kirk* thereto, but were elected in time of our *Soveraign's* Mother, when things were out of order. It is an abſurd thing, that ſeveral of them having no function of the *Kirk*, ſhould be judges to Miniſters, and depoſe them from their places. Therefore they either would be diſcharged to meddle with Eccleſiaſtical matters; or it would be limited to them in what matters they might be judges, and not hurt the libertie of the *Kirk*.

They alſo that formerly were of the Eccleſiaſtik Eſtate in the Popes *Kirk*, or that are admitted of new to the Papiſtical Titles, and now are tollerate by the lawes of the Realme to poſſeſſe the two part of their Eccleſiaſtical rents ought not to have any further liberty, but to intromet with the por-

tion, assigned and granted to them for their life times, and not under the abused, titles, which they had, to dispone the Kirk rents, set tackes and fewes thereof, at their pleasure, to the great hurt of the Kirk and poor labourers, that dwell upon the Kirk lands, contrarie to all good conscience and order.

CHAP. XII.

Certain special heads of Reformation, which we crave.

WHatsoever hath been spoken of the Offices of the *Kirke*, of the several Power of the office bearers, of their Conjunct Power also, & lastly of the Patrimonie of the Kirk, we understand it to be the right Reformation, which God cravesat our hands, that the Kirk be ordered according thereto, as with that order, which is most agreable to the word.

But because something would be touched in particular, concerning the estate of the Country, and that which we principally seek to be reformed in the same, we have collected them in these heads following.

Seing the whole Country is divided in Provinces & these Provinces againe are divided in Parishes, as well in Landward, as in Townes; in every Parish & reasonable Congregation, there would be placed one or moe Pastors to feed the flock, & no Pastor or Minister alwayes to be burdened with the particular charge of moe *Kirks* or Flockes then one alone.

And

And becauſe it will be thought hard to finde out Paſtors or Miniſters to all the Paroch Kirks of the Realm, as well in Landward. as in Townes, we think by the advice of ſuch, as commiſſion may be given to by the Kirk and Prince, parishes in landward or ſmall villages may be joyned, two orlhree or more, in ſome places, together. and the principal and moſt commodious Kirks to ſtand, and be repaired ſufficiently, and qualified Miniſters placed thereat; and the other *Kirks*, which are not found neceſſary, may be ſuffered to decay, their *Kirk* yards alwayes being kept for burial places, and in ſome places where need requires, a Parish, where the Congregation is over great for one *Kirk*. may be divided in two or moe.

Doctors would be appointed in Univerſities, Colledges, and in other places needful, and ſufficiently provided for, to open up the meaning of the Scriptures, & to have the charge of Schooles, and teach the Rudiments of Religion,

As for Elders, there would be ſome to be Cenſurers of the manners of the people, or moe in every Congregation, but not an Aſſembly of Elders in every particular Kirk but onely in Townes. & famous places, where reſort of men of judgement and abilitie to that effect may be had, where the Elders of the particular *Kirks* about may conveen together, and have a Common Eldership, and Aſſemblie-place among them, to treat of all things that concerne the Congregations, of which they have the over ſight.

And as there ought to be men appointed to unite & divide the Parishes, as neceſſity & commodity requires: So ther would be appointed by the general *Kirk*, with aſſent of the Prince, ſuch men as feare God, and know the eſtate of the Countries, that were able to nominate and deſigne the places, where the particular Elderships should conveen, taking conſideration of the Dioceſſes, as they were divided of old, and of the eſtate of the Countries, and Provinces of the Realme.

Likewiſe concerning Provincial and Synodal Aſſemblies, conſideration were eaſie to be taken, how many and in what places they were to be holden; and how oft they should conveen, ought to be referred to the liberty of the General Kirk, and order to be appointed therein.

The National Aſſemblies of this Country, called commonly the General Aſſemblies, ought alwayes to be retained in their own liberty, and have their own place. With power to the Kirk to appoint times and places convenient for the ſame, and all men, as well Magiſtrats, as Inferiours, to be ſubject tothe judgement of the ſame, in Eccleſiaſtical cauſes, without any reclamation or appellation to any Judge, Civil or Eccleſiaſtical within the Realme.

The libertie of the election of perſons. called to the Eccleſiaſtical functions, and obſerved without interruption, ſo long as the Kirk was not corrupted by Antichriſt, we deſire to be reſtored and re-

retained within this Realm. So that none be intruded upon any Congregation, either by the Prince, or any inferiour Perſon, without lawful election, and the aſſent of the people, over whom the perſon is placed; as the practice of the Apoſtolical and *Primitive* Kirk, and good Order crave.

And becauſe this order, which Gods word craves, cannot ſtand with Patronages and preſentations to benefices, uſed in the Popes *Kirk*, we deſire all them, that truely feare God, earneſtly to conſider, that for as much as the names of Patronages and Benefices, together with the effect thereof, have flowed from the Pope, and corruption of the Canon Law onely, in ſo far as thereby any Perſon was intruded or placed over *Kirks* having *curam animarum*. And for as much as that manner of proceeding hath no ground in the Word of God, but is contrary to the ſame, and to the ſaid liberty of Election, they ought not now to have place in this light of Reformation. And therefore, whoſoever will embrace *Gods* Word, and deſire the *Kingdome* of his Son Chriſt Jeſus to be advanced, they will alſo embrace, and receive that Policie and Order, which the Word of God, and upright Eſtate of his Kirk crave, otherwiſe it is in vaine that they have profeſſed the ſame.

Notwithſtanding as concerning other Patronages of benefices, that have not *curam animarum*,

as they ſpeak, ſuch as are Chaplainries. Prebendaries founded upon temporal lands, annuals, & ſuch like, may be reſerved unto the ancient Patrones, to diſpone hereupon when they vaike, to Scollers and Burſers, as they are required by act of Parliament.

As for the *Kirk* rents in general, we deſire that order be admitted and maintained amongſt us, that may ſtand with the ſincerity of Gods Word, and practice of the Kirk of Chriſt.

To wit, that as was before ſpoken, the whole rent and patrimony of the *Kirk*, excepting the ſmall patronages before mentioned, may be divided in foure portiones: one thereof to be aſſigned to the Paſtor, for his entertainment, and hoſpitalitie: an other to the Elders, Deacons and other Officers of the *Kirk*, ſuch as Clerks of Aſſemblies, Takers up of the Pſalmes, *Beadels* and keèpers of the *Kirk*, ſo farre as is neceſſarie; Joyning with them alſo the Doctors and Schooles, to help the ancient foundations, where need requires: the third portion to be beſtowed upon the poor members of the faithful, & on hoſpitals: The fourth for reparation of the *Kirks*, and other exttaordinarie charges, as are profitable for the *Kirk*, and alſo for the Common wealth, if need require

We deſire therefore the Eccleſiaſtical goods to be uplifted, and diſtributed faithfully to whom they appertaine, & that by the miniſterie of the Deacons, to whoſe office properly the collection and diſtri-

distribution thereof belongs, that the poor may be answered of their portion thereof, and they of the Ministery live without care and solicitude: as also the rest of the treasure of the Kirk may be reserved, and bestowed to their right uses.

If these Deacons be elected with such qualities, as Gods Word craves to be in them, there is no feare, that they shall abuse themselves in their Office, as the prophane Collector did before.

Yet because this vocation appeareth to many to be dangerous, let them be obliged, as they were of old, to give a yearly account to the Pastors and Eldership, & if the Kirk and Prince think expedient, let cautioners be obliged for their fidelity, that the Kirk rents no wayes be dilapidat.

And to the effect this order may take place, it is to be provided, that all other Intrometters with the Kirk rent, Collectors general or special, whether it be by appointment of the Prince, or otherwayes, may be denuded of further intromission therewith, and suffer the Kirk-rents in time comming to be wholly intrometted with by the ministry of the Deacons, and distribute to the use before mentioned.

And also to the effect, that the Ecclesiastical rents may suffice to these uses, for the which they are to be appointed; We thinke it necessary to be desired, that all Alienations, Setting of fewes, or tacks of the rents of the Kirk, as well Lands as

Teinds, in hurt and diminution of the old rentals, be reduced and annulled, and the Patrimony of the Kirk restored to the former old liberty.

And likewise, that in times coming the Teinds be set to none, but to the labourers of the ground, or else not set at all; as was agreed upon, & subscribed by the Nobility before.

CHAP. XIII.

The utilitie that shall flow from this reformation to all Estates.

SEeing the end of this spiritual Government and Policie, whereof we speak, is, that God may be glorified, the Kingdome of Jesus Christ advanced, and all who are of his mystical body, may live peaceablie in conscience: Therefore we dare boldly affirme, that all those, who have true respect to these ends, will even for conscience caule gladly agree and conforme themselves to this order, and advance the same, so farre as lyeth in them, that their conscience being set at rest, they may be repleniſhed with spiritual gladneſſe, in giving full obedience to that which Gods Word, & the testimony of their own conscience do crave; and in refusing all corruption contrary to the same.

Next, we shall become an example and patterne of good and godly Order to other Nations, Coun-

Countries, and Kirks, professing the same Religion with us: that as they have glorified God in our continuing in the sincerity of the Word hitherto, without any errours, (praise to his name;) So they may have the like occasion in our Conversation, when as we conforme our selves to that Discipline, Policie, and good Order, which the same Word, and purity of Reformation crave at our hands. Otherwise that fearful sentence may be justly said to us, *The servant knowing the will of his Master, and not doing it, &c.*

Moreover, if we have any piety or respect to to the poor members of Jesus Christ, who so greatly increase and multiply amongst us, we will not suffer them to be longer defrauded of that part of the Patrimony of the *Kirk*, which justly belongs untothem: and by this order, if it be duely put to execution, the burden of them shall be taken off us, to our great comfort; the streets shall be cleansed of the cryings and murmurings of them, as we shall no more be any schandal to other Nations, as we have hitherto been, for not taking order with the poor amongst us, and causing the Word which we professe to be evil spoken of, giving occasion of sclander to the Enemies, and offending the Consciences of the simple and godly.

Besides this, it shall be a great ease & commodity to the whole Common people, in relieving them of the building and upholding their *Kirks*, of build-

building of bridges and other like publick workes; to the Labourers of the ground, in payment of their teinds; and shortly in all these things, whereinto they have been hitherto rigorously handled by them, that were falsly called Kirk-men, their Tacksmen, Factours, Chamberlanes and Extorsioners.

Finally, to the Kings Majestie, and Common wealth of the Counrrey this profite shall redound, that the other affaires of the Kirk being sufficiently provided, according to the distribution, of the which hath been spoken, the superplus, being collected in the Treasure of the Kirk, may be profitably employed, and liberally bestowed upon the extraordinary support of the affaires of the Prince and Common-wealth, and specially of that part, which is appointed for reparation of Kirks.

So to conclude, all being willing to apply themselves to this order the people suffering themselves to be ruled according thereto; the Prince and Magistrates not being exemed, and they that are placed in the ecclesiastical Estate rightly Ruling and governing, God shall be glorified, the Kirk edified, and the bounds thereof enlarged, Christ Jesus and his Kingdome set up, Satan and his Kingdome subverted, and God shall dwell in the midst of us, to our comfort, through Jesus Christ, who, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, abides blessed in eternity, *Amen.*

FINIS.